Lincoln

MOORE

E 457
.8
.M81
Copy 1

Class E457

Book .8

M81

Moral Grandeur of the Proclamation of Emancipation.

A SERMON

DELIVERED ON THE

DAY OF NATIONAL THANKSGIVING,

DECEMBER 7, 1865,

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, CITY OF WASHINGTON.

IN THE

Plymouth Congregational Church, Pittsburgh, Penn'a.

BY

REV. HENRY D. MOORE,

PASTOR.

PITTSBURGH:

PRINTED BY W. S. HAVEN, CORNER OF WOOD AND THIRD STREETS.

1866.

Moral Grandeur of the Proclamation of Emancipation.

A SERMON

DELIVERED ON THE

DAY OF NATIONAL THANKSGIVING,

DECEMBER 7, 1865,

IN THE

Plymouth Congregational Church, Pittsburgh, Penn'a.

BY

REV. HENRY D. MOORE,

PASTOR.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, CITY OF WASHINGTON.

PITTSBURGH:

PRINTED BY W. S. HAVEN, CORNER OF WOOD AND THIRD STREETS.

1866.

PITTSBURGH, December 8th, 1865.

REV. H. D. MOORE,

Dear Sir — Having listened with great pleasure to your Sermon, delivered in the Plymouth Congregational Church, on Thanksgiving morning, and believing that its circulation would be productive of great good, we respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

Very truly, yours,

JOHN A. EMERY,
OTIS BROWN,
JOEL SMITH, JR.,
Committee.

PITTSBURGH, December 11th, 1865.

GENTLEMEN —

Your note of the 8th inst. was duly received. I thank you for the kind and flattering terms in which you are pleased to speak of my Thanksgiving Sermon. With the hope that you may not be altogether disappointed in your design in asking the Sermon for publication, I herewith place it in your hands.

Yours truly,

HENRY D. MOORE.

To JOHN A. EMERY, OTIS BROWN, JOEL SMITH, JR., *Committee.*

SERMON.

"RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION; BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE."—Proverbs 14: 34.

THE great Rebellion which for four long, weary years, clouded the brightness, and hushed the songs, and checked the festivities of our Annual Thanksgiving, has been crushed; its battle array broken and scattered; its leaders branded forever, by the popular voice, with the infamy of treason; its deluded masses, by the retributive fortunes of an unholy resistance to the Government, reduced to waste and poverty, to political and social impotency, and to dependence for supplies, and homes, and protection upon the very arm they sought to break, and upon the very heart they sought to pierce; the rebellious, chastised and still sullen children, are clinging to the mother whom they covered with tears and blood, and are living upon the fountains of her breast, which flow as freely toward them, as if their matricidal hands had not been swift to slay her.

The great war is done! The monotone of wailing which is borne on every wind and from almost every home, because of loved ones slain on the battle field, is now relieved of its bitter and despairing significance by the full chorus of victory which is being shouted from the mountains to the prairies, and from the lakes to the sea; while the loyal millions of the land come, to-day, with the sacrifice of memory and of tears, to hallow the graves of the martyrs.

The great conflict of arms is ended! The noise of busy preparation and of the armed tramp, has given place, in our ears, to the hum of all the arts of industry; and the fears of our homes, and the alarm beats of our hearts, have subsided to a serene calm under the gentle waving of the Olive Branch of Peace. The ploughshare, which, in fulfilment of the Prophecy of Joel, was

beaten into the sword, has been, in fulfilment of the Prophecy of Isaiah, beaten back again into the ploughshare; and the hand which, at the call of patriotism, loosed its hold of the plough, and grasped the sword, and with it reaped the harvest of death on the battle field, has again guided the ploughshare over the broad, teeming acres of the peaceful homestead; and the deep furrows it has turned up to the genial sun and the gentle dews, have smiled with the flowering beauty, and waved with the green, and golden, and grateful plenty of the harvest. The great and mighty government which was shaken to its centre, while the world waited to see it topple and fall, has vindicated its integrity and maintained its supremacy, and has come forth from the fiery, and bloody, and terrible ordeal, mightier than ever, consecrated by the awful ceremony of blood, to holier purposes, and is marching on, beyond the ranks of all the nations, to a grander destiny; and our Flag which went down at Sumter amid the silence, and tears, and prayers of the bowed patriot band to receive the baptism of fire and blood, has gone up again to unfold its stars in a purer heaven, and to float its stripes, with added symbols of beauty and power, over a broader domain, and over a happier and freer people.

For these, and the innumerable blessings which have been poured with an unsparing hand upon our land and people, and which have most kindly and beneficently mingled with and lighted up the dark providences whose awful dispensations have lowered upon us:—for these, and the innumerable blessings of our God, and the God of our Fathers, who is merciful, as well as just, and whose merciful kindness guided us through the paths of the four long years of war—paths, which though blasted with the lightnings of His wrath, were yet all overarched with the bow of promise:—for these blessings, the hopes and foretastes of which made us able to bear the strokes of the Almighty Hand which desolated alike the Capitol mansion and the lowliest hovel of the land—leveling all ranks, and laying our mighty President low in death beside the humblest soldier:—for all these blessings, we are to-day gathered, by the Proclamation of the Nation's Chief, to render devout and hearty thanksgiving to Almighty God. In all our sanctuaries throughout the land, the people are convoked with the memories of God's unspeakable goodness clustering within them, and with the voice of thanksgiving, and with grateful praise.

And God sees us from His High and Holy Tabernacle, and He bows down His ear to hear the praises we bring to Him from our altars and our hearts; and if our thanksgivings are mingled with the tones of plaintive and sincere repentance for, and confession of all our sins—if we praise the goodness of God, which leads us to repentance—then His ear will be filled with music, to Him sweeter far than when the hosts of the angels chaunt their chorals of glory around His Throne in heaven.

We occupy to-day a stand point from which we can look back, and around, and beyond, and we may profitably contemplate the past, the present and the future, in the light of God's Holy Truth —Truth which he has so thrillingly illustrated in the providences with which He has visited us, in the light of the truth of this text, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." Let us welcome and walk in the light, reveal it what, and lead it whither it may. The providences of God as concerning nations, as well as concerning individuals, are self revealing. They unfold their meanings and purposes, and they unfold and disclose them to the men and the nations who stand still, and wait and watch to see the salvation of God. God reigns; and though clouds and darkness are round about Him, yet still and forever, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His Throne; and still and forever, light is sown for the righteous, amid whatever of gloom; and gladness is sown for the upright in heart, amid whatever of sorrow.

"God's purposes are ripening fast."

And though

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his works in vain,"

Yet still and forever—

"God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Let us then seek for light, that we may be guided in our duties as Christian citizens. Let us meditate upon the facts and principles which are disclosed to view in the history of our recent past; the origin and animus of our terrible war; the miracles of Providence, of Divine Interposition, which give tone to the picture of our national desolation, and which led us by an irresistible hand, an overruling guidance, to deal justice and equity in this broad

land; and the glorious results which have followed, and are still to follow our national obedience to the irrevocable command, "Break ye every yoke, and let the oppressed go free!" And our meditations upon these facts and principles involved in our recent history, are intended as an argument in vindication of

THE MOTIVE AND MORAL GRANDEUR OF THE PROCLAMATION OF EMANCIPATION, AS SEPARATE AND DISTINGUISHED FROM ITS CONSTITUTIONAL WARRANT UPON MILITARY NECESSITY.

It is now evident to every candid mind—whatever may have been our views and fears heretofore—that the cause of our terrible war was the holding in bondage, by the sanctions and covenants of the Constitution, and by the legislation and government of the Congress, and of the States, of millions of our fellow beings upon our soil. It is also a fact, and has passed into irreclaimable history, never to be glossed or margined by sophistries, that the first blow of the war was struck in the interests of human bondage, in the defence of the system and for its aggression. The Flag of the Free, as it was called and hailed the world over, went down at Sumter at the bidding, not so much of the *defenders* of Slavery—for a system so well and amply defended, hardly needed defenders—as of the proud, imperious, *chivalric* human bondage *propagandists*; the Flag came down at the thunder of cannon of the enemies of Liberty! For two whole years, nearly, the loyal battalions of the country, who leaped to arms at the call of the Government, were fighting for, they knew not what! While the armies of the rebellion were fighting—not for the *existence*, nor yet for the *defence* of Slavery, for the existence of Slavery was covenanted and sanctioned, and its defence was amply guaranteed in the Constitution and the legislation of the land—but for the *supremacy* over this broad land of the system of human bondage! I am simply and candidly repeating the facts of history, which have been so recently traced in characters of blood—facts which have been accepted by the world. If the South had been fighting for the *defence* of Slavery, under the sanctions and guarantees of the Constitution, then the South could have appealed to the governments of the Old World for help against the covenant-breakers of the North, and Europe would have rushed to her rescue with her

armed hosts! But such was not the fact. The North was no covenant breaker! The Government was most stubbornly set against any interference with the constitutional rights and guarantees of the system of Slavery. So far were the North and the Government from interfering with Slavery rights and guarantees, that they had overlaid and interlined the broad margin of the Constitution with interpretations, and commentaries, and compromises, extending, in point of fact, over vast areas, and in point of principle, over the whole country, the accursed system, and infusing an unconquerable and irresistible vigor into its maddened nerves, and most malignant heart! The South was fighting for no such thing as the *defence* of Slavery; for no such thing as the sacredness of constitutional guarantees. The South was fighting for the *supremacy* of the system of Human bondage. The governments of Europe tried, in their hostility to the great Republic, to overlay the facts, and the principles involved, with diplomatic sophistry, but the stubborn things would not be overlaid, they lifted themselves up and shouted, and they have passed into monumental history, and are now without the shadow of controversy. When the Flag went down at Sumter, the proud and haughty Southron said, and for the moment it was true—so true, that tyrants rejoiced, and freemen wept—the Southron said, "Freedom goes down with the Flag, and our institution of Slavery triumphs over the land." Let me here repeat the facts I have presented, for God was in them, ruling and overruling them for the final overthrow of wrong, and for the glorious triumph and vindication of right. *First.* From the beginning to the end of the war, the armed hosts of the rebellion were fighting for the supremacy of the system of Human bondage—not for its existence, nor yet for its defence, for both were guaranteed—but for its *supremacy* over the whole land, as the end and the aim of the Government, and as the highest good of the acres, and the men, and the homes of the land. And *Secondly.* For nearly two whole years of the noise of war, and of garments rolled in blood, the loyal armies were fighting for, they knew not what; for that, which in the clearest and best understanding of it they could get, was most indefinitely and ambiguously stated to be the Flag and the Government. For two whole years, our fathers, and sons, and brothers went out from their homes to fight the bloody field, and to die for the Flag and the Government.

Let us look at this second fact, that we may show its reality and learn its lessons.

The Government and the Flag were, *prima facie*, glorious things to fight for. Our boys sung, as they marched forth to the field,

> "Rally round the Flag, boys,
> Give it to the breeze;
> That's the banner we love,
> On the land and seas."

As they went out to fight for the Flag, that was a pertinent and inspiring rallying song to sing, and so they sung it, and its music made our hearts leap within us, and our eyes to glisten with tears. But then, the North had a conscience, and that conscience was latently true to Liberty, and when the boys went out to fight, and so many of them never to come back again, God troubled that conscience. It became quick to reason, and God took care that it should reason right. It became sensitive to truth. It reasoned thus, "As things now stand or go, in logic and in fact, the Government means bondage, and the Flag means protection to Slavery." It was a terrible conviction which thus flashed upon the Northern conscience. Garrison preached it a generation ago, but our conscience is just awakened to it. We called Garrison, Ishmael and Infidel, but we found out at last that he was the friend of man, and his word the truth of God, only waiting to be confirmed in the facts of history. The Northern conscience reasons further, and says, "The Constitution is the basis of the Government and the Constitution guarantees Slavery. If our armies fight against Slavery, then, by construction and by fact, they fight against the Constitution which guarantees and defends Slavery. And the Flag is the protecting symbol of the Government, and is set for the defence of the Constitution, wherever it waves, and therefore, the Flag means protection to Slavery, and if our armies fight against that which the Flag protects, then they fight against the Flag." So the conscience of the loyal people reasoned, and reasoned truly. The logic was irresistible, and as appalling as irresistible. Still the trumpet sounded forth to the war, and the men trooped and tramped to the carnage, to fight, for what? For the Flag and the Government! The North and the loyal people were not fighting against Slavery, intentionally and of set purpose Their blows told against Slavery, directed by the unseen sword of

the Lord and of Gideon, but they did not mean it so. The rebellious armies were avowedly fighting for Slavery; the "mudsills" were to go under, with the Flag, and Slavery was to triumph; while the ranks and columns of the Government were not fighting against it for nearly two long years of blood. Still they fought, and bravely too, for something, for nothing, for this, and for that, for the Flag and the Government! And still they sung, and died singing it, men and boys together—daring Generals and intrepid drummer-boys—

"Rally round the Flag, boys,
Give it to the breeze;
That's the banner we love,
On the land and seas."

And when Butler called the slaves within his lines "contraband of war," the people were as much amused at the legal cunning and military strategy of the General, as they were startled at his daring, and its possible results; it was a flash of farce, on the tragic front of war.

But when Fremont made a practical application of the contraband doctrine, and proclaimed the slaves of rebels in his lines all free, the Government rebuked him, demanded his sword, and retired him in military disgrace. Butler's wit was amusing, though in reality it was true; but Fremont's application of it was misrule and anarchy. The Constitution guarantees the largest liberty of speech, and therefore Butler's "contraband of war" passes unchallenged; but the Constitution shelters no overt act of defiance, or opposition, and therefore Fremont's deed is annulled and branded, and the General himself accounted by the Government an unprofitable servant. The President did what he, as President, was required to do. It was the wrong thing done the right way, while Fremont's act was the right thing done the wrong way. The President said, "Fremont, you are right in motive, but your act is wrong, the Constitution being judge; my motive is as yours, but I stand upon, and by my sacred oath, I administer the Constitution." How strange this complication, and how impotent were the hands of the Government! The world saw the riddle and awaited its solution; the world saw the paradox more and more startling and perplexing, and awaited the logic of events to reduce it to reason. The rebellion was armed and fighting for Slavery;

the Government was fighting to put down the rebellion, but how could the Government put down the rebellion, and not touch Slavery, for which the rebellion was organized and armed? For nearly two whole years of war, the loyal people in arms struck at the rebellion, while the Government spread its fostering and peculiar care over the thing which the rebellion defended; and slaves who brought most reliable information into loyal camps, were rewarded by the Government with a prompt return to their rebel masters! The Government commanded the army to strike! Generals said, "What shall we strike for?" The Government answered, "Strike for the Government and the Flag!" The Generals asked, "What shall we strike at?" The Government answered, "Strike at the rebellion!" The Generals and soldiers said, "But the source and power of the rebellion is Slavery; shall we strike at that, and break every chain, and let the oppressed go free?" The Government thundered, "No! under penalty of courts martial in every camp!" And on rushed our ranks and columns of brave men, to obey orders, and to strike at the rebellion!

What a picture this is, as we now look back upon it! And what a picture it was then to many anxious and grieved eyes! And no wonder! The Constitution guaranteed the system for which the rebellion was armed. We do violence to our judgment and conscience, when we attempt to evade this point. The President, our beloved and lamented Lincoln, saw the dilemma, and felt its crushing weight! The Confederate leaders saw it, and defied the Government, and invoked the powers of Europe to their aid! It was an awful time! Defeat followed defeat! The Government wavered in its plans, and seemed almost imbecile in its purposes! No wonder! Its hands were manacled! Statesmanship tried to untie the knot, and failed; and when a sharp, daring sword was lifted to cut it, the voice of the Government cried in terror, "Hold!" and the sword paused in the air, and then fell from the hand of the warrior. It was a dark and awful time! The Flag trailed in the dust and blood of battle, torn, and all its stars dimmed! The world looked on—part of it with prayers and tears; part of it with indifference, and part of it with secret and ill-disguised delight. Our armies were beaten back; panic gave the word and disaster followed; treason ruled in the camp, and

outranked loyalty along the lines; traitors hid themselves safely in gun-boats, and published bulletins to brave men to retreat shamefully, or lie down in swamps to die. Brave men died gallantly on the battle field, but without any significant purpose to be sealed with their blood! Our Flag was flouted with the contempt of the nations, and the American Eagle dimmed his eye, and drooped his wings, and uttered no scream! As the stars in their courses fought against Sisera, so it seemed as if the very heavens were against us. We had the men, we had the money, and humanly speaking we had the power; but neither the men, nor the money, nor the power, nor all of them combined, brought success! Something was needed besides and above the men, and the money, and the power which men and money bring. The element of true power was wanting. One thing we lacked. We had courage, bravery, endurance, the spirit of sacrifice; but one thing was lacking. It was an appalling spectacle, this tournament of death! The contending armies consumed and swallowed each other up, without the gain of vantage ground! How great was our God in these dispensations, as we now look back upon them. God was mindful of us all the while, but the lesson He was teaching us we were slow to learn. With us it was a question of the triumph or defeat of the Government; with God it was a question of the triumph or defeat of the Truth. With us it was a question of law and order; with God it was a question of Justice and Purity. With us it was a question of power; with God it was a question of equity. With us it was a question to be adjudicated by the sword; with God it was a question to be arbitrated by righteousness. God was bringing us into His plans and methods, and we were loth to let go our hold upon ourselves. God said, "Your wealth, and your power, and your state, and your pomp of battle array, are abhorrent to me; your sacrifices of blood I will not accept. The sacrifice which I will approve, and honor, and bless, is this, 'That ye break every yoke and let the oppressed go free.'" The President was anxious and grieved, but quiet and firm. He retired to pray. Light dawned amid the gloom. Hope gleamed its light upon the night of despair. The President came forth from his closet, pale, but undaunted, and like strange music to men's hearts, came forth from him the preliminary announcement of the Proclamation of Emancipation. The Nation held its breath! The new,

strange watchword—Freedom—was whispered in the camp and on the field. In due time, on the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, came the Proclamation itself. It was received with august reverence, as we would receive an angel, in every home; it was proclaimed at the head of the army, and the Flag floated out, with conscious pride, in the new air of Freedom. It struck terror into the hearts of our enemies, because it so sharply defined the principles and purposes of the contending armies, and the issues of the war. Some one said to the President, in view of his Proclamation, "Do you think the Lord is on our side?" He answered, "I am not so much concerned as to whose side the Lord is on, as I am to know if I am on the Lord's side." The right hand of that great and good President, which penned in the stillness of the solemn night, the Proclamation of Emancipation for four mlilions of men, women and children, on our soil, was stronger then than all our armies combined. Thereafter the sword was grasped by an idea, which had a heart in it; it was the sword of the Lord and of Gideon; and the bullet whistled along the path of death with a reason for it, and the victory was won! The array of the loyal armies in their mighty tramp, thundered not such fear in the hearts of our enemies, as did that Proclamation by its awful whispers of Justice, Equity and Righteousness! The pen, writing the bond of liberty, the charter of freedom, out-ran and out-thrust the sword, and greeted the victory forever!

> "Beneath the rule of men entirely great,
> The Pen is mightier than the Sword. Itself a nothing;
> But taking sorcery from the master hand,
> To paralyze the Cæsars, and to strike
> The loud earth breathless."

A new era dawned. Men looked as if God were speaking to them. Men smiled as if they heard God's voice marshalling them, and promising blessings to them. The President was unyielding. Treason howled at him; traitors gnashed on him with their teeth. The assassin lurked for him at the hallowed threshold of his home and at the sacred portals of the Capitol. Timid men were more hesitating than ever. Statesmen tried their arts upon him in vain, and then stood appalled at the master-stroke of a spirit they could not comprehend. But the President failed not of his word,

or his purpose, one jot or tittle. The Proclamation said, "The slaves are free, and their freedom shall be maintained." Said one of the Cabinet, "Say not maintained—for you know we might fail of that." The President answered, "They are free, and their freedom shall be maintained." The great King of Kings stood at his right hand, and the cord which bound the hands and the feet of the people were snapped asunder! The soldiers were still in the camp, and they still marched forth to the field, and they still fought for the Government and the Flag. But now the Flag and the Government meant something higher and nobler than before. They still sung, but it was a new song they chaunted and chorused. They now sung,

"Rally round the Flag, boys, rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of *Freedom;*
Rally from the hill top, rally from the plain—
Shouting the battle cry of Freedom."

The gallant New York Seventh Regiment, composed of the wealth and fashion of that great metropolis, electrified the country by marching down Broadway, under the waving of flags and handkerchiefs, singing—

"John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave;
His soul is marching on."

In the darkest night of our trial, Mrs. Howe caught the inspiration of the spirit of Justice and of Emancipation, and her "Battle Hymn of the Republic" was the fore-runner of the Proclamation.

"Mine eyes have seen the coming of the glory of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He has loosed the fateful lightnings of His terrible swift sword—
For God is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
We have builded Him an altar 'mid the evening dews and damps;
I have read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
His Truth is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
As you deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero born of woman crush the serpent with his heel:
For God is marching on.

He hath sounded forth the trumpet, that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat;
O be swift my soul to answer Him, be jubilant my feet,
Our God is marching on.

Mid the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea ;
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me ;
As He died to make men Holy, let us die to make men Free ;
Our God is marching on."

The ground of the Proclamation of Emancipation was Military Necessity. The President was right. The only ground upon which the President could proclaim emancipation was that of Military Necessity. The Constitution shut every door against him but this one. The Constitution guaranteed Slavery. There was the wrong. The President was sworn to keep the Constitution inviolate, and to administer the Government upon it. He could not evade it, nor alter it, nor amend it. The spirit of Slavery brooded over and upon the beginnings of the Republic, and infused its poison into the infant life of the nation. Even the Declaration of Independence is shorn of its true glory, by its framers having yielded to the demands of Slavery, arrogant and unyielding even in that glorious period of new-fledged liberty. You remember the list of usurpations and of political crimes which that instrument portrayed and laid to the charge of the King of England. The greatest crime, as Jefferson wrote the Declaration, which was charged upon George the Third, was that he enslaved men and women and children of Africa upon this soil; that he countenanced and authorized the buying and selling of human beings, and for so doing he charges the King with committing a crime against human nature itself, characterizing it as the crime of deepest die. When the draft of the Declaration was reported to Congress, that clause of it, referring to Slavery, was stricken out at the demand of South Carolina and Georgia, who five years ago consummated their perfidy by leading off in the infamous Secession acts. Thus the very beginnings of our national life were poisoned with Slavery. The Constitution ranked no higher, on this question, than the spirit of its framers, who were imbued with the spirit of the men, who with all their patriotism and self-sacrifice, allowed the true and crowning glory of the Declaration of Independence to be blighted. The Constitution, with its guarantees, was the supreme law of the land. The President could not amend it. As President he must administer the Government upon it. Congress alone could amend it, and that by a vote of two-thirds of its members, and that again subject to the ratification of the States and of the people. The

President could not do it. He has been criticised here and blamed. I think wrongfully. But if the freedom of the slave is necessary to the salvation of the country, then the Constitution sanctions the demands of necessity. The merchant captain on the high seas is a felon, if he throw overboard, to the value of a single dollar, the cargo committed to his care; but if his vessel is on her beam ends, every particle of her precious cargo may and must go to the bottom of the sea, if necessary to save the ship. Necessity knows no law. That *is* law. The Constitution most solemnly guarantees the right of every citizen to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; it guards the sacred rights of property, and person, and home; but if necessity require it, the Government takes the property, and the person, and devotes them to its uses, and the Constitution sanctions the demands of the necessity. The writ of Habeas Corpus, the fairest and best fruit of constitutional liberty, the brightest jewel in the brilliants of Magna Charta, the final safeguard of the liberties of the people, even that may be suspended at the demand of necessity. So the freedom of the slave was needed for the Government; his bondage was in the way of the march of our armies, and the Government made him free upon the ground of Military Necessity. The President was right. He was cautious and entirely constitutional in his executive acts. His act was strictly within the limits of his oath and fidelity to the Constitution. As an executive act, it must be regarded as the grandest in history. It challenged diplomatic criticism. Europe dreamed that the President had made a great mistake, and awoke to find their intrigues baffled. Palmerston's hand was palsied as he read of it: and Louis Napoleon was outreached in his cunning grasp at power by the constitutional act of the rail splitter. It brought the world to its knees at the feet of honest and indomitable Abraham Lincoln.

But the glory, the undying glory, the ever-increasing glory of the Proclamation of Emancipation, is in the motive of it! The President's warrant for the act was one thing, his motive in it was another thing. His warrant for it was an incident in human legislation, his motive in it is as eternal as the Throne of God. His warrant for it will be forgotten, but the motive of it will shine and flame with the fires of a perpetual glory. His warrant for the act was in the letter of the Constitution, but his motive for it gives it all its glory in a moral point of view. It is to this motive I now

call your attention, in the higher view which, as Christian citizens, we must take of this great act, bearing as it does, not only upon this land and people, but upon all lands and peoples; not only upon this generation, but upon all generations to come; and which concerns, not only time, but reaches to eternity and to God. It was not that he could play off a desperate game against our enemies, and cry "check," as the key-note of their dismay, that he proclaimed Emancipation. It was not merely that it gave our armies and our cause military advantage, by securing the sympathies of the Freedmen, and quickening the fears of their masters, that he wrote, and signed, and proclaimed the bond of Emancipation. These were results, but they were not the motive, the inspiration of the act. No such motive of mere policy and strategy prompted the greatest deed of statesmanship that history can ever record. He claims Military Necessity as the ground of his act, not as the motive of it. Let us do honor to the distinction. For the justification of his act, as an executive act, he appeals to the Constitution; but he does not appeal to the Constitution for the justification of his motive. For the justification of his motive he appeals to a higher and an eternal tribunal!

What is his motive? It is expressed in a single line; it blossoms out of a single word of the Proclamation. We have overlooked it, I fear. The President says, "UPON THIS ACT, SINCERELY BELIEVED TO BE AN ACT OF JUSTICE!" In that single sentence is contained the motive and the inspiration which led him to this mighty deed! EMANCIPATION! "Sincerely believed to be an act of Justice!" As an act, "Warranted by the Constitution upon Military Necessity," he might have appealed for justification only to a legitimate construction of the Constitution; but as an act of JUSTICE, he appeals for justification beyond the Constitution, and beyond the country, and beyond the age, and from men to God! He says, "Upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of Justice warranted by the Constitution, upon Military Necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the Gracious Favor of Almighty God."

When the Proclamation went forth, sealed with such faith and Divine assurance, and calm trust in the Right, and sanctioned by such a solemn appeal to earth and heaven, to time and to eternity, the Rebellion was shorn of its power; disloyal men hid their faces

from sight, and loyal and strong men kissed each other in the streets, and wept on each other's necks. It was only a question of time for the advent of Peace. Every stroke of the rebellion thereafter, was a struggle, a vain struggle with death. Justice was done, not mercy given, not favor bestowed, but Justice was done at last in behalf of millions of God's children in the land. And God therefore gave us the victory! It was a righteous act, righteously performed, and Righteousness exalted the nation!

Abraham Lincoln! His work was then done! He waited to see the salvation of God. Nor did he wait in vain. His act, under God, saved the country. And there never was an executive act in all history, which, in its motives, tendencies and forever accumulating results was so in the interests of Religion and of Christ's kingdom, as was this act. Abraham Lincoln! He was ready to die. His death was the last blow of the rebellion, reduced to the arm of a drunken assassin. And as our martyred President passed to Heaven through the wide open gates of glory, the Angel of Peace kissed him welcome, and then passed out on bright and swift wings to bless the land.

Military Necessity has passed away, but the Proclamation of the President, the fair fruit and exemplification of Eternal Justice, remains in full force. It was no mere military expediency measure, when Congress enacted the Constitutional Amendment, prohibiting Slavery forever in this land; it was solemnly done as an act of Justice. And when the States ratified the act of Congress, it was an act of Justice. The freedom of the slave was proclaimed, and is maintained! Our transition pangs from Slavery to Liberty, were awful; the throes of the nation were appalling! But we are redeemed! The emphasis of the Constitution is the tone of universal liberty, and the waving of the Flag in every breeze, means freedom for all over whom it floats!

Emancipation prepares the way, and leads to a higher plane of National life than this country has ever attained. Reconstruction is a new word among us, and it has its definite and appropriate political meanings. But the word which truly characterizes our new national life, is, Regeneration. We are born again! Let it be said—reverently—we are redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from our vain conversation, received by tradition from our fathers. We are delivered from the bondage of cor-

ruption, into glorious liberty. Henceforth we lead a new life: new principles inspire us; a new destiny is before us. Old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.

Henceforth our politics are to be projected in the plane of Morality and Religion. The trade of the politician is to be remembered to be abhorred. The "meanly minded men who bartered freedom for a rich man's feast, and sold their country for a smile," have gone to the moles and to the bats. Christianity asserts the supremacy, and what will God do unto us if we fail to honor Christ's title to dominion over this broad land! "Be wise now, therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed, ye Judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear; kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."

The National Life is essentially and immeasurably purer to-day than it ever was. The days of compromises, and of the bargain and sale of the National honor, are forever gone. We have done Justice in behalf of millions of men, women and children on our soil. Let it be thorough Justice. Better call men chattels, and make them slaves, and doom them to bondage, than to call them men, and withhold from them men's rights! We ask not for magnanimity toward a long enslaved race, only for Justice and the Right. Right wrongs none! With universal liberty, the tendency is to perfect equality before the law for all the citizens of this great country. Prejudices are to be overcome; customs are to be modified; and character, not wealth—*character*, not color—*character*, is to be the standard of the citizen and the glory of the state; and a man unimpeached before the law, is to stand unchallenged at the ballot. We can have no politics now separate from Morality and Religion. We are to be Christian citizens, true to Christ, and therefore true to our country; true to our country, and therefore true to Christ.

E My '13

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 012 025 740 7